

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Intent to Repatriate Cultural Items in the Possession of the USDA Forest Service.

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior

ACTION: Notice.

Notice is hereby given under provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of the intent to repatriate cultural items in the possession of the Cibola National Forest, USDA Forest Service, that meet the definition of "sacred object" under Section 2 of the Act.

The items consist of 138 bundles of feathers, several loose fragments of feathers and two corn husk bundle ties. Each feather bundle contains either two or three feathers tied with cotton twine on the lower shaft. With approximately one half of the bundles, the twine and some feathers are stained with red ochre. A few of the bundles are made up entirely of small feathers but most consist of one large feather and either one or two small feathers. The large feathers are turkey or hawk. With few exceptions, each bundle contains one small blue feather from a Stellar's or other jay.

The feather bundles were collected by a hiker from a shrine on the Sandia Mountains (New Mexico) in the late summer/early fall of 1984 and were brought to the Sandia Ranger District, Cibola National Forest several weeks later. A review of published and unpublished ethnographic information identified 27 Indian tribes and pueblos that traditionally used the Sandia Mountains. All 27 Indian tribes and pueblos were notified of the feather bundles.

Representatives of the Pueblo of Jemez have inspected the items and have identified them as prayer feather bundles. The representatives of the Pueblo of Jemez indicated that the prayer feather bundles are left as offerings at a shrine on the Sandia Mountains as part of their traditional religious practice. Once left as a offering, Jemez Pueblo religion requires that such prayer feather bundles not be disturbed.

The Pueblo of Jemez has identified the prayer feather bundles and associated materials as sacred objects of the Pueblo of Jemez and requested their repatriation. The Pueblo of Sandia, the Pueblo of Acoma, the Pueblo of Isleta and the Pueblo of Zuni have been consulted following their expressions of interest in the feather bundles. The Pueblos of Sandia, Acoma, Isleta and Zuni support the claim of the Pueblo of Jemez to this particular collection of feather bundles from the Sandia Mountains.

Based on the above mentioned information officials of the USDA Forest Service have determined, pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001 (3) (C), that these feather bundles are specific ceremonial objects needed by the traditional religious leaders of the Pueblo of Jemez for the practice of their traditional religion by its present day adherents. Officials of the USDA Forest Service have further determined, pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 3001 (2), that there is a relationship of shared group identity which can be reasonably traced between these prayer feather bundles and the Pueblo of Jemez.

This notice has been sent to officials of the Pueblos of Jemez, Acoma, Isleta, Sandia, and Zuni. Representatives of any other Indian tribe which believes itself to be culturally affiliated with these cultural

items should contact Dr. Frank E. Wozniak, NAGPRA Coordinator, Southwestern Region, USDA Forest Service, 517 Gold Avenue, S.W., Albuquerque, NM 87102, telephone: (505) 842-3238, before April 21, 1995. Repatriation of these sacred objects to the Pueblo of Jemez may begin after that date if no additional claimants come forward.

Dated: March 15, 1995

Ruthann Knudson
Acting, Departmental Consulting Archeologist,
Acting, Chief, Archeological Assistance Division

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